Indian companies and by the Indian technicians who are highly qualified. And these technicians are qualified to be, what you call, operators in business So, if these highly qualified technicians, when they retire, want to start co-operatives,—money is not important and I am sure that there are enough companies in the country which would come up with the money—and since these people have the technical capabilities to do this job, I can assure the Member that I will see to it that they are given preference.

SHRI MENTAY PADMANABHAM : Sir, as I go through the answer given by the Minister, I find that a number of oil-fields have been thrown open to the private enterprises and for joint ventures between the ONGC and the private parties. But the oil-fields that have been approved so far have been limited to Gujarat only and one oil-field on the Cauvery offshore. I would like to know from the Minister whether any oil-field in the Krishna-Godavari basin has been offered to the private parties or for joint ventures. If so, which are those oil fields ? And why is there delay in finalising the contract ?

CAPT. SATISH SHARMA : Sir, I have already mentioned the reasons for delay. Thirteen small oil-fields have already been awarded; five have to be offered to the successful bidders in Gujarat and six have not been awarded. Now I don't have the details here about the oil-fields on the Krishna-Godavari basin. I will check it up and pass on the information to the hon. Member.

SHRI VIREN J. SHAH : Sir, may I enquire from the hon. Minister as to wehther there is a Government policy or a declared intention of giving these oil fields to the Indian exploration companies which are already there ? I would also like to know whether they are being given preference compared to whose who are coming for the first time. Part (b) of my question is whether there is transparnecy in awarding this contract. And, will the hon. Minister kindly assure that there will be complete transparency in awarding these oil-field contracts ?

CAPT. SATISH SHARMA : Sir, to part (a) of his question, I would like to say that if a company, which has been in exploration and which is now trying to get into the discovered oil-field exploration process, meets all the technical parameters and are financially competitive, certainly, it is our policy that such a company which has done exploration work in the country should get preference. As regards part (b) of his question, I can assure the hon. Member that we will strive to see that the whole process is transparent so that there are no complaints of that sort.

MR. CHAIRMAN : Question No. 104.

*104. [*The Questioner (Shri Satish Pradhan) was absent. For answer vide col.....infra.*]

Mr. CHAIRMAN : Question No. 105

Shortfall in Freight and Passenger Earnings

*105. SHRI SUNDER SINGH BHANDARI :†

SHRI SURESH KALMADI :

Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state :

(a) what has been the shortfall in the freight and passenger earnings during the current year till date;

(b) what are the reasons therefor; and

(c) what steps are being taken to make up the shortfall ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTER OF RAILWAYS (SHRI K. C. LENKA) : (a) to (c) A statement is laid on the Table of the Sabha.

Statement

(a) Information is being collected and will be laid on the Table of the Sabha.

(b) The main reasons for drop in earnings are :—

(a) Passenger traffic did not grow at the rate anticipated.

(ii) Traffic offering from Core Sectors falling below the expected levels in freight loading.

†The Question was actually asked on the floor of the House by Shri Sunder Singh Bhandari.

(iii) Reduction in the average lead o freight traffic.

(c) Some of the important steps taken make up the shortfall are as follows :—

(1) Plugging leakage of revenue both in passenger and freight through frequent inspections, surprise checks etc.

(2) Installation of computerised self printing ticketing machines.

(3) Meeting the demands of trade for transport fully.

(4) Introduction of new trains, short distance trains and Diesel Multiple Units.

(5) Extension of run of some of the trains.

(6) Augmentation of accommodation through attachment of extra coaches on the existing trains wherever possible.

(7) Intensive marketing for less than train/Wagon load of traffic.

श्री सुन्दर सिंह भंडारी : श्रीमन, रेलवे बजट के पेश होनें के बाद भी, जिसमें रिवाइज्ड एस्टीमेट भी उल्लिखित है, उसके बाद भी सरकार का यह कहना है कि सूचना इक्ट्ठी की जा रही है। जो रिवाउज्ड एस्टीमेट है उसमें पैसेंजर फ्रेयर में करीब 24-50 लाख रूपये कम आने की उम्मीद है और गुडस फरेट में 34 लाख रुपया कम आने की संभावना है। अब इसके बाद भी आपने किराये बढ़ाये हैं, फ्रेट बढ़ाया है। क्या आपने इस बात की जांच की है कि पिछले दिनों में जो आमदनी कम हुई, उसकी एक बहुत बड़ी वजह यह थी कि कराये ज्यादा बढ़े और फ्रेट ज्यादा बढ़ा और उस वजह से रेल का उपयोग करने के बजाय लोगों ने ट्रकों के माध्यम से या बसों के माध्यम से डिस्टेंस कवर करना प्रिफेर किया अगर यह बात सत्य है तो फिर इस संबंध में सरकार का क्या विचार है ?

SHRI K. C. LENKA : I have given in detail in my written statement that the Indian Railways have geared up themselves to carry 370 million tonnes of freight traffic during the current year as projected by the Planning Commission. But the core sector did not come with their offer which they assured us to give at the beginning of the Plan period. So, 370 million tonnes of freight traffic which was targeted could not be achieved, and we revised this target to 362 million tonnes. and we are going to achieve that.

SHRI SUNDER SINGH BHANDARI : What about passenger traffic ?

SHRI K. C. LENKA: Regarding the passenger traffic, Sir, the hon Member knows why we could not achieve our targets so far as the passenger traffic is concerned. There are so many things, as you know, the Ayodhya matters and so many strikes. *(Interruptions)* that is why the traffic has come down. Mainly the traffic has come down because of these disturbances the strikes, and the Ram Janmabhoomi movement. So, so many trains have been cancelled, and we could not achieve that target.

श्री सुन्दर सिंह भंडारी : श्रीमन्, अयोध्या से तो छुटकारा नहीं मिलेगा। आप अपने डिपार्टमेंट की बात अगर करेंगे तो उसका ज्यादा फायदा है। स्टैंडिंग कमेटी में भी, रेलवे पर जो स्टैंडिंग कमेटी बनी है, उसने भी पैसेंजर एमिनिटीज के मामले में बहुत सख्त स्ट्रिक्चर पास किये हैं। उनका यह कहना है कि अभी भी सैकड़ों स्टेशन ऐसे हैं जहां पीने के पानी की व्यवस्था नहीं है, यूरीनल की व्यवस्था नहीं है, शेड नहीं है, सफाई का इंतजाम गाड़ियों में नहीं है और गाड़ियों में देरी घटों तक होती है, इस वजह से भी पैसेंजर रेल गाड़ी में ट्रैवल करना पसंद नहीं करते। गुड्स ट्रैफिक के मामले में पिलफरेज और चोरियों की शिकायतें बढ़ती जा रही हैं। क्या सरकार इस बात की व्यवस्था करेगी कि पेसेंजर एमिनिटीज के लिये जो पैसा रखा गया है—1992 में आपने 50 करोड़ रुपये का प्राविजन करने क बाद 10 करोड़ रुपया भी खर्चे नहीं किया।

आजकल पैसेंजर्स एमिनिटीज के नाम पर कम्प्यूटराइजेशन और वेटिंग हाल के एयर

कंडीशंस का इस्तेमाल हो रहा है। बेसिक एमेनिटीज पर कितना खर्चा कर रहे हैं आप ? वह भी अगर नहीं कर पाते तो पैसेंजर उसके कारण परेशान होता है। गूड्स कन्साइनमेंट की चोरियों से लोगों को नुकसान उठाना पड़ रहा है। इन दोनों में आप किस प्रकार सुधार की अपेक्षा करते हैं ?

SHRI K. C. LENKA : We have given priority to passenger amenities in the current year for which we have provided Rs. 60 crores. We have also issued instructions to ensure that this amount is spent for this purpose. So far as leakages and thefts on the goods traffic are concerned, we have taken a number of measures to check any pilferage and theft. But this is not the main reason in the decline in goods traffic in the country. The main reason is the dwindling scenario in the core sectors. So far as steel, cement, fertilizers and petroleum products are concerned, they were not offered for movement to the extent we had projected. We are now trying to make up for whatever we lost. We are discussing the issue with the concerned departments.

SHRI SURESH KALMADI : Transportation by rail is a much cheaper form than transportation by road, but unfortunately we find the people offering lesser and lesser goods for transportation by rail. Even the core sectors are not placing adequate orders with the Railways. Barring coal and cement, all other sectors are resorting to road transport for movement of the raw materials, for teel plants, pig iron, iron ore, foodgrains, fertilizers and even petroleum products. Transportation by rail is much cheaper and faster and environmentally safe and it is also energy-efficient. There is something wrong somewhere. I want to know the steps which the Government proposes to take. They have to make their marketing strategy more innovative so that people take to goods transportation by rail.

SHRI K. C. LENKA : We are having an intensive and aggressive marketing strategy this year to attract more rail traffic. As the hon. Members are aware, we are the bulk carriers. The Railways carry the goods wherever they are available to full wagon or rake load. In most cases, parcels and other materials offered to us are not coming in full wagon load or rake load and that traffic diverts to road transport. We are now planning to establish container service and we have established depots at different places to attract persons sending smaller parcels to be carried by rail. We are also conducting a market survey of the areas where these goods are available and we are trying to attract these goods to be transported by rail.

DR. YELAMANCHILI SIVAJI : One of the reasons for a decline in goods traffic is the enhancement in the tariff rates which makes rail traffic less competitive compared to road traffic. The second aspect is the time schedule for the goods to reach the destination. Goods meant for transport to various ports cannot reach the destination on time. I want to know the steps which the Government proposes to take in this regard. Even in the present Budget there is enhancement in the rates. Is there any proposal before the Government to see that the rates are reduced and time schedule to reach destination is adhered to so that Railway can become more dependable compared to road traffic ?

I would like to know whether there is any proposal under the consideration of the Government.

SHRI K. C. LENKA : Sir, we have already abandoned the conventional way in regard to transportation. We are computerising it. We are interested in seeing that goods are moved faster and reach their destination within the scheduled time.

So far as the freight rates are concerned there is no proposal to reduce it. The rates which have been fixed are still less than the cost of carrying otherwise. Therefore, there is no question of reducing the freight rates.

श्री मूलचन्द मीणा: सभापति महोदय, मैं यह कहना चाहता हूं कि रेल विभाग की नीतियों के कारण माल भाड़े की ढुलाई में कमी आई है। आपने इसके तीन कारण बताए हैं : रेल विभाग की पहले यह नीति थी कि कहीं भी किसी भी स्टेशन से वेगन भर लेते थे लेकिन आज वेगनों पर रोक लगाई जा रही है और रैक भरने के बाद पूरी ट्रेन को किराये पर उठाने की व्यवस्था की गई है। यह मुख्य कारण है। छोटे छोटे स्टेशनों पर वेगन भरने लायक माल तो लाया जा

सकता है लेकिन पूरी ट्रेन का माल नहीं लाया जा सकता है। इसलिए माल ट्रकों से लाना पड़ता है। मैं यह जानना चाहता हूं कि क्या आपकी इन नीतियों के कारण माल भाड़े की ढुलाई में कमी आई है ?

SHRI K C LENKA : I have already said that we are modifying our rules. We are seeing as to how small quantities of goods can be carried. We are looking at it. That is why the Container Corporation has established depots at different places for procuring goods. We are also modiying our rates.

SHRI P. UPENDRA : The hon. Minister has refused to consider the reduction of freight rates. But I feel that increase in the freight rates and passenger fares may be acting as a counter-productive measure for the Railways and they may be losing traffic because of this.

The hon. Minister mentioned about the marketing organisation. As far as I know, the marketing organisation in the Railways is defunct. They are not doing anything. I would like to know from the hon. Minister whether he is trying to examine the effect of the uni-gauge policy. Though, in the long run, it is desirable, the point is whether it is leading to more transhipment points and, as a consequence of which, leading to more delays in transportation.

SHRI K. C. LENKA : Sir, I am not suggesting that the gauge conversion is the main reason for the reduction in freight traffic. Of course, there was some impact. When we convert some line, whatever traffic that was being carried in that area gets reduced. But it is not correct to say that because of the increase in freight rates, more goods are not being offered.

We are now giving priority to the movement of goods. If the customers get their goods at the destination within the scheduled time, more goods would be offered. We are looking at it and we will see that the consumers get their goods at the destination within the scheduled time and safely as well.

श्री जगदीश प्रसाद माथुर : श्रीमन्, क्या मंत्री जी को यह मालूम है कि खास तौर से पश्चिमी रेलवे में यह कहा जाता रहा है कि बड़े वेगन, ऐसे पहिये वाले वेगन जो हैं उन पर रिस्ट्रिक्शन था, पूरा भरने नहीं देते थे। कम माल भरने की इजाजत होती थी। लेकिन भाड़ा वह पूरा लेते थे। ऐसे पच्चासों केसेज के उदाहरण पश्चिमी रेलवे में हैं। क्या आपको इनकी जानकारी है और यदि जानकारी है तो कितने केसेज में आपने भाड़ा वापिस किया है और कितने केसेज में नहीं किया है और कितने मुकदमें चल रहे हैं ?

SHRI K. C. LENKA : Sir, this information is not with me, but I will examine that.

श्री ओ० पी० कोहली : सभापति महोदय, मैं मंत्री महोदय से जानना चाहूंगा, उन्होंने यह तो कहा है कि आने वाले वर्ष में पेसेंजर्स अमेनिटीज के लिए जो रकम रखी गई है उसको पूरा पूरा खर्च किया जाएगा। पिछले तीन वर्षों में पेसेंजर्स अमेनिटिज के लिए कितनी रकम का प्रावधान किया गया है और उस में कितनी वास्तव में खर्च की गई ? जितनी रकम का प्रावधान किया गया उसको खर्च न किये जा सकने के क्या कारण रहे ? यह मेरे दो प्रश्न हैं।

SHRI K. C. LENKA : Sir, I have already said that we have given priority so far as passenger amenities are concerned. In 1993-94, Rs. 60 crores were given and in 1994-95 as I have already said, Rs. 60 crores have been allotted for passenger amenities. I can assure the hon. Member that whatever amount has been allotted for passenger amenities will be spent properly during the current year.

MR. CHAIRMAN : Question Hour is over.

WRITTEN ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS

Recommendation made by the National Institute of Public Finance and Policy on Pollution

*104. SHRI SATISH PRADHAN : Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state :

(a) whether Government have received any recommendation on standardization of ambient pollution from the National Institute of Public Finance and Policy;